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## Our opinion

### Parade and protest in Plymouth

Plymouth is big enough for a parade to honor the first Thanksgiving and for a Native American protest against injustices without the two clashing and without any angry confrontation or disruption. They can be held on the same day—even at the same time. That wasn't the case this year, but police and town officials should make sure it is next year and thereafter.

Native Americans certainly have a ton of legitimate grievances against the way they were treated by white settlers. They were driven from their lands. Their property was stolen. They were killed, beaten, raped and robbed. Their cases are well-documented and they form a shameful scar on the history of the United States.

Many Native American consider the Pilgrims' arrival as the start of the European exploitation and the slaughter of their tribes. So they held a memorial ceremony on Thursday at the statue of Massasoit to commemorate what they consider to be the National Day of Mourning for Native Americans. They have every right—maybe even a duty—to protest in this and other ways.

However, they went further—too far. For the third consecutive year, some Native American groups this Thanksgiving disrupted a Pilgrim Progress parade—a reenactment of the march that 51 Mayflower survivors made to Burial Hill to pray after enduring their first winter in Plymouth. The procession, which includes many Mayflower descendants, has been held since 1920.

These people have the same rights as others.

This year some Native Americans, chanting anti-Pilgrim slogans, lined up to block the parade. At the request of police, cooler heads in the Pilgrim Progress parade cut short their procession instead of trying to break through the ranks of protestors. They feared fights and possible injury, especially to children in the parade.

This was a wise decision. Now it is up to leaders on both sides to meet with town officials and police to make sure both have their say, without clashing. The Native Americans protest and the remembrance of Thanksgiving are important enough to share space in this historic town.